

Message Text

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ACTION AF-06

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 IO-10 ISO-00 DPW-01 SR-02 ORM-01 AID-05

SCA-01 L-02 CIAE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00 /048 W

----- 026451

R 281523Z MAR 75

FM AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3858

INFO AMCONSUL ASMARA

AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM

AMEMBASSY ROME

AMEMBASSY OTTAWA

USMISSION GENEVA

C O N F I D E N T I A L ADDIS ABABA 3685

E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR SWEL ET US

SUBJECT: RELIEF OPERATIONS IN ERITREA

REF: STATE 062884

1. IN ACCORDANCE WITH INSTRUCTIONS REFTEL, EMBASSY HAS INFORMED ICRC REP GAILLARD, PAPAL NUMCIO ETTELDORF AND THE AMBASSADORS OF GHANA, THE U.K. CANADA, ITALY AND CAMAROON OF ITS DEMARCHE TO THE FOREIGN MINISTER EXPRESSING HOPE THAT THE EPMG WILL ADOPT A FORTHCOMING POSTURE WITH REGARD TO APPROPRIATE RELIEF ACTIVITIES IN ERITREA BY THE INTERNATIONAL RED CROSS AND OTHER ESTABLISHED VOLUNTEER AGENCIES.

2. THE DEAN OF THE DIPLOMATIC CORPS, CAMEROON AMBASSADOR DICKO, HAS INFORMED THE CORPS THAT HE WOULD LIKE TO MAKE A DEMARCHE TO THE EPMG ON BEHALF OF THE CORPS REGARDING THE DESIRABILITY OF ICRC AND THE OTHER RELIEF ACTIVITIES IN ERITREA. HE EXPECTS TO DISCUSS THIS QUESTION WITH A COMMITTEE OF THE CORPS DURING THE WEEK BEGINNING MARCH 31. MEANWHILE HE EXPECTS TO SEE THE FOREIGN MINISTER TODAY AND TO MAKE A DEMARCHE TO HIM ON THIS SUBJECT ON BEHALF OF THE AFRICAN CHEIFS OF MISSION IN ADDIS. AMBASSADOR DICKO HAS
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ALSO INFORMED US THAT HE HAS DISCUSSED THE ISSUE WITH

OAU ADMINISTRATIVE SECRETARY-GENERAL ETEKI, AND THAT THE LATTER HAS BROACHED THE SUBJECT TO FOREIGN MINISTER KIFLE. DICKO ALSO SAID HE UNDERSTANDS THAT THE EPMG HAS NOW AUTHORIZED ICRC REP GAILLARD TO VISIT ASMARA VERY SOON.

3. THE GHANAIN AMBASSADOR TOLD US ON MARCH 25 THAT HE NOW HAS FORMAL INSTRUCTIONS TO RAISE THE ENTIRE RELIEF ISSUE WITH FOREIGN MINISTER KIFLE.

4. BRITISH AMBASSADOR MORRIS RAISED THE SUBJECT OF RELIEF FOR ERITREA, INCLUDING THE ICRC, WITH MOFA PERMANENT SECRETARY GETACHEW KIBRET ON MARCH 21. THE REACTION WAS NOT ENCOURAGING. GETECHEW SAID THAT ETHIOPIA HAD NO LEGAL OBLIGATION UNDER THE GENEVA CONVENTION TO PERMIT ICRC OPERATIONS IN ERITREA. HE ALSO DENOUNCED AS FALSE THE RECENT ICRC PUBLIC STATEMENT THAT IT HAD BEEN REFUSED PERMISSION TO SEND A REPRESENTATIVE TO ERITREA. GETACHEW SAID THE CHARGE WAS FALSE BECAUSE A FINAL DECISION HAD NOT BEEN MADE AS YET.

5. ITALIAN AMBASSADOR SABETTA HAS INDICATED THAT ITALY HAS SO MANY PROBLEMS REGARDING ITS OWN NATIONALS AT PRESENT THAT HE DOES NOT INTEND TO MAKE REPRESENTATIONS ON THE RELIEF ISSUE.

6. CANADIAN AMBASSADOR REYNOLDS HAS INSTRUCTIONS PERMITTING HIM TO MAKE REPRESENTATIONS ON THE RELIEF ISSUE. HE DOES NOT INTEND TO DO SO IN THE NEAR FUTURE, HOWEVER, PRINCIPALLY BECAUSE HE WOULD RATHER "RESERVE HIS FIRE" FOR REPRESENTATIONS REGARDING THE POSSIBLE EXECUTION OF POLITICAL PRISONERS. HE ALSO FINDS ANY REPRESENTATIONS AWKWARD INASMUCH AS CANADA DOES NOT RECOGNIZE THE PRESENT GOVERNMENT, A POSTURE WHICH IS THROWN IN HIS FACE WHENEVER HE MAKES REPRESENTATIONS.

7. COMMENT: REPRESENTATIONS TO THE EPMG ON BEHALF OF THE AFRICAN CHIEFS OF MISSION HERE HAVE IN THE PAST PROVEN QUITE EFFECTIVE. AMBASSADOR DICKO'S REPRESENTATIONS TODAY MAY THEREFORE BE OF REAL HELP IN FACILITATING PROGRESS ON THIS ISSUE. WE WILL STAY IN CLOSE TOUCH WITH HIM ON THIS
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SUBJECT AND PROVIDE ALL POSSIBLE ENCOURAGEMENT WITH REGARD TO A DEMARCHE ON BEHALF OF THE DIPLOMATIC CORPS HERE.
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